

# **Successes and Obstacles to Walkability in Bellevue**

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# What makes a place walkable?



Safety



Convenience



Interest



Aesthetics



Coherence



Comfort

# Safety

- Pedestrians separated from cars, preferably with a barrier
- Lighting
- Safe ways to cross the street
- “Defensible space”

# Convenience

- Connectivity/direct routes
- Connections through parking lots and multiple developments
- Crosswalks at all intersection legs and selected mid-blocks
- Building access that works for pedestrians—not just drivers

# Interest

- Most people won't walk if there's nothing to look at and it's boring...
- Activated street fronts/sidewalk oriented retail, etc.
- Windows/visual penetration
- Food/drink/seating at the sidewalk edge—people-watching

# Aesthetics

- Paving materials, color, scoring
- Public art along pedestrian pathways
- Special pedestrian lighting
- Landscaping
- Quality of the pedestrian improvements

# Coherence

- Way-finding
- Maps
- Conventional signage
- Memorable features

# Comfort

- Weather
- Wind
- Noise
- Seating
- Restrooms



# **City of Bellevue**

## **In broad overview, we have:**

- ✓ Supportive policies in the Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ A Pedestrian/Bicycle System Plan
- ✓ Close link between land use and transportation strategies
- ✓ Active traffic calming program
- ✓ Fit and Active Bellevue—a multidisciplinary partnership
- ✓ Downtown Bellevue a key example of a mixed use “retrofit”
- ▶ But huge challenges to becoming fully pedestrian-friendly

# Focus on Walkability of Downtown Bellevue

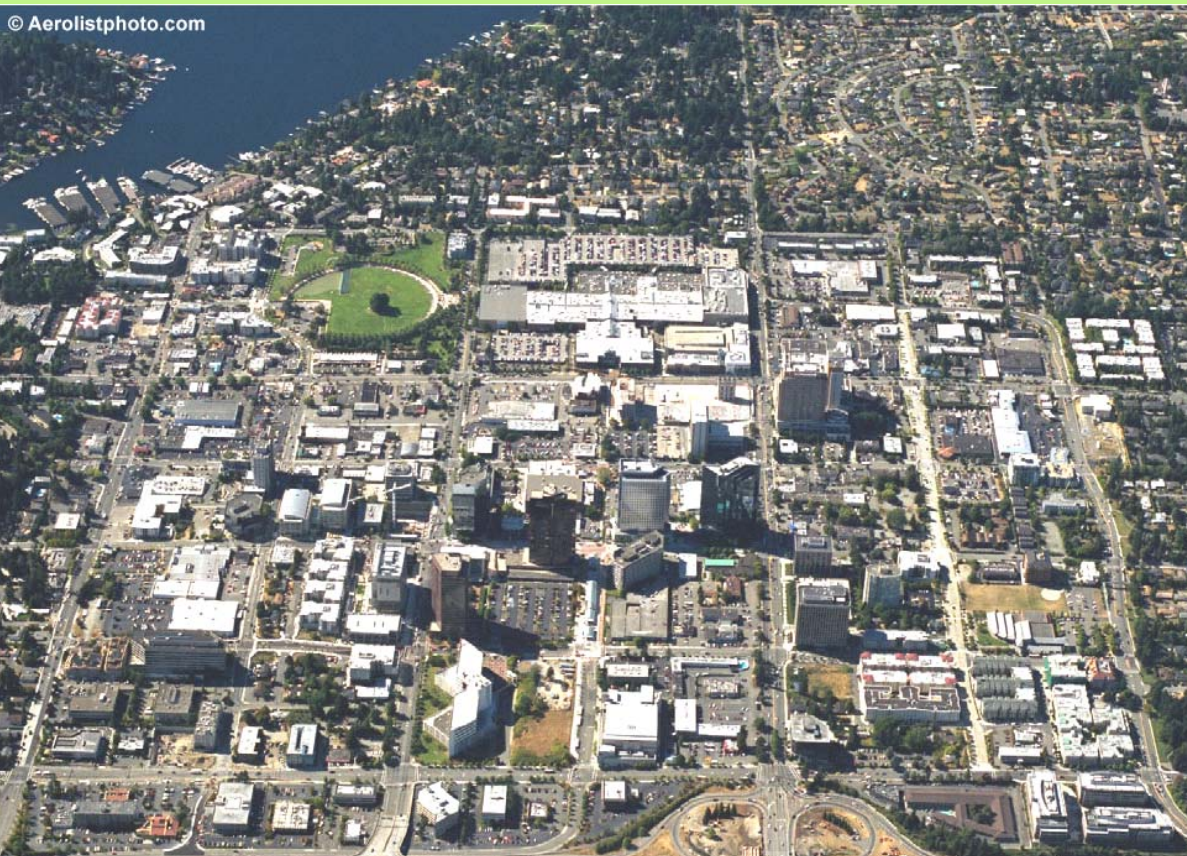


- Good case study, b/c urban centers are key to region's growth management strategy
- Sustained effort over a period of time
- Retrofit context

# Big Picture



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- Mixed use
- Density
- Parking limits/  
underground  
parking

May 2006



# Pedestrian Corridor





# Pedestrian Corridor





# Transit Center







# Downtown Sidewalks





## Downtown Sidewalks



# Through-Block Connections



# Through-Block Connections





# Building-Sidewalk Interface





# Weather Protection



May 2006

# Parks & Open Space

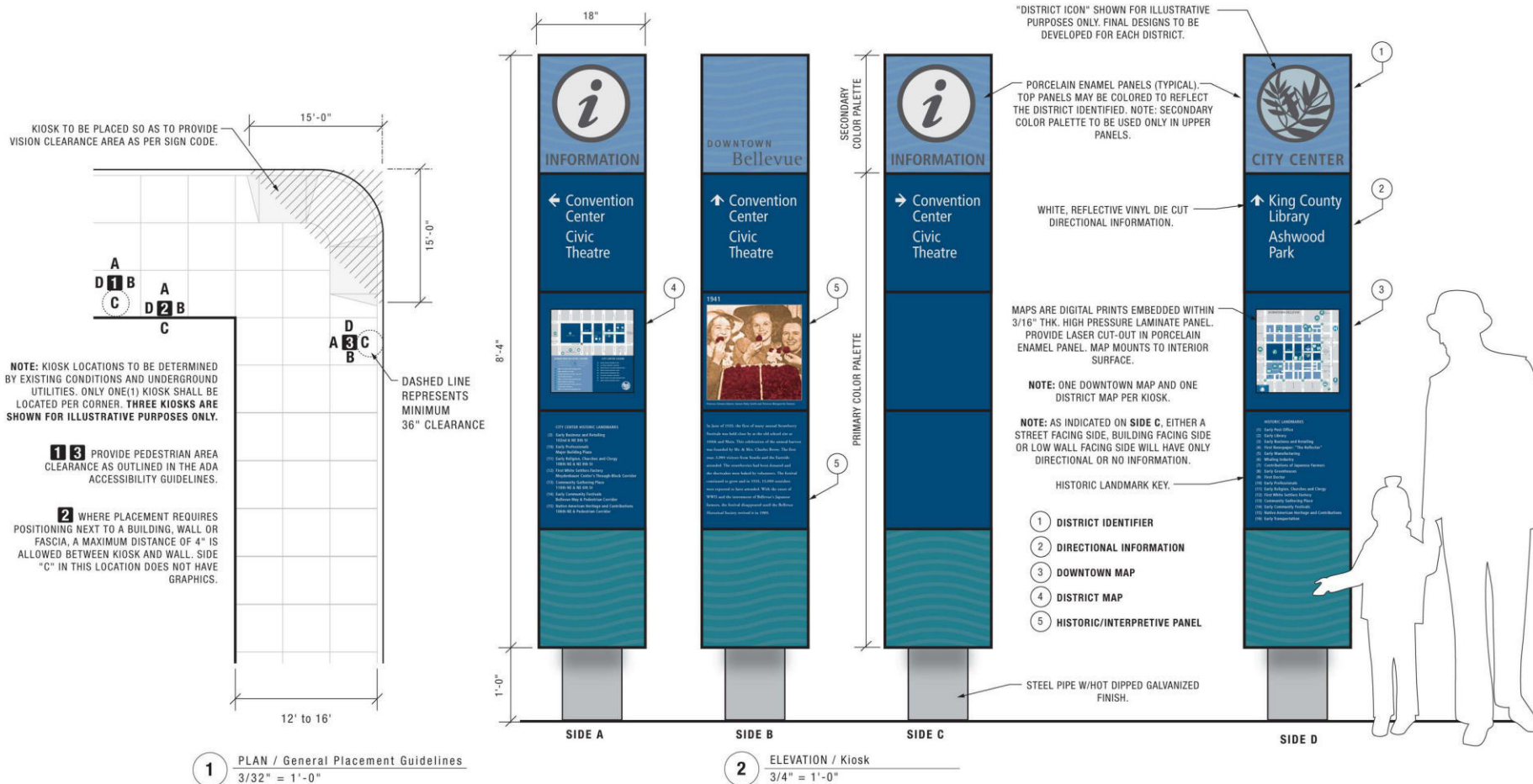




# Privately developed Open Space



# Next: Wayfinding



## LOCATION

Placed along primary pedestrian corridors and major district intersections.

## APPLICATION

Direct pedestrians to major urban destinations and promote district and city-wide activities. Content includes district identification, destinations within walking distance (1/4 mile), downtown/district maps and historical/regional information.

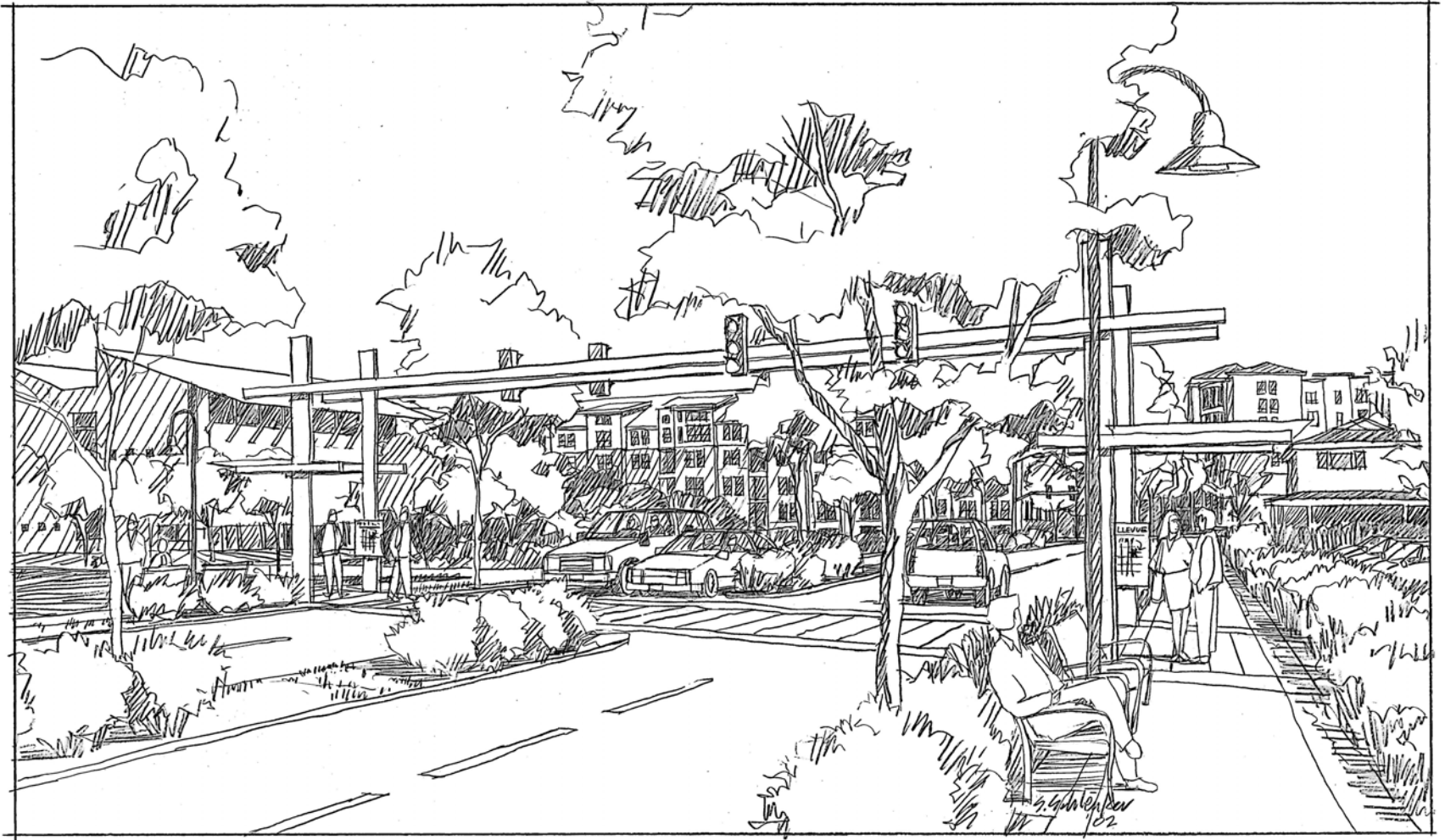
## DESCRIPTION

Four-sided, porcelain enamel structure. White, reflective vinyl directional information and changeable, digitally printed maps. Permanent historical/thematic graphics are porcelain enamel or can be applied, deep photo etched stainless steel or bronze plaque.





# Next: Mid-Block Crossings





# Next: “Alleys with Addresses”





# Next: Green Streets



## Issues & Obstacles

- Wide arterials, some w/bulb-outs at intersections
- Limited right of way/cost to acquire new right of way
- Gaps in the urban fabric
- Lack of shared parking
- Lack of on-street parking
- Difficult to make street-front retail work in some locations
- Sky-bridges?

# Walkability Bottom Line

*Design – of places and communities -- is always about trade-offs. It's critical to have champions for walkability constantly raising awareness, envisioning the experience of the places we are creating, and helping craft the right outcomes.*